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NEWS YOU CAN USE, NEWS YOU CAN TRUST

Race track approval irks city lead

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

When Michigan Racing Commissioner Christine C. White issued a track license to Post It Stables, Inc. for a horse race track in Huron Township, advocates of horse racing cheered loudly.

But officials in Romulus, who spent nearly three years supporting a plan to build a harness racing track within their city that ultimately fell apart last year were left cold.

"I am very pleased to announce that thoroughbred racing will continue here in

"I am very pleased to announce that thoroughbred racing will continue here in Michigan."

Christine C. White

Michigan," White said. "Our office has worked with Post It Stables, Inc. to make this happen."

Though the approval of the license was a big

coup for Huron Township, it e the City of Romulus' ability to operator for a parcel of land Interstate 94, where Canadian track operator Magna purchased land for a harness racing facility that was later scrapped.

"Don't get me wrong, but I wish Huron (Township) all the best with the facility," said Mayor Alan Lambert.

"The approval of the license does mean that we'll never get a track - there's just not the means to support two tracks that close to each

See **Track**, page 4

Airport decision delayed

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

A delay in a decision regarding the proposed airport expansion plan will give the city about six more weeks to determine if any aspects of the plan are beneficial to the city, and to protest those they feel are detrimental.

The Wayne County Airport Authority decided not to approve or deny the expansion plan at the March 20 meeting. During the meeting several local officials voiced concerns about the plan and expressed a need for more information.

The delay is the latest in a war of words between the city and the airport about the plan, which has been a thorn in the side of officials at both the airport and the city for the past several weeks.

"We applaud the Airport Authority board for acting in a responsible manner and giving all parties more time to work on a plan that will benefit the airport while protecting the community," said Romulus Mayor Alan Lambert.

"We must not rush through a plan that will devastate our neighborhoods, leaves too many questions unanswered and is opposed by communities across southeast Michigan," he added. "The board's decision to slow things down today will give the airport and local communities more time to work together on a plan all parties can accept."

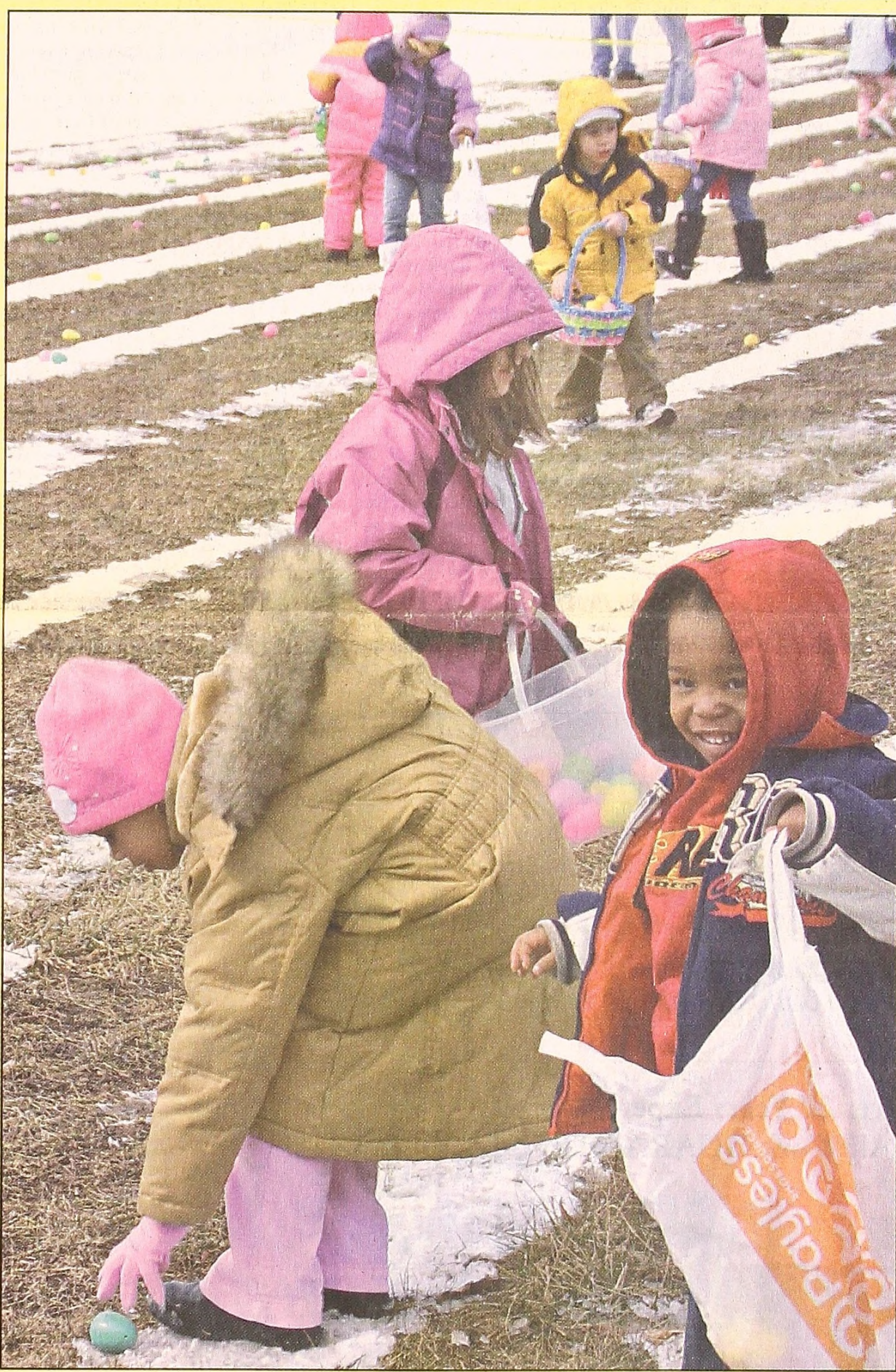
The authority is expected to take up the plan again at a May 22 meeting, according to city officials.

A big idea

The Detroit Metropolitan Airport Master Plan has been under way for several months, and is a requirement mandated by the Federal Aviation Administration. The authority hired a group of contractors and planners in 2006 to come up with an expansion plan. It would be implemented only if passenger traffic levels increase by 2.3 percent during the next several years.

The plan includes building a fifth parallel runway that would be constructed in about 2017.

The runway appears at this time to be the most contested part of the plan because several residences and businesses would have to be demolished and relo-



Eggs-citement

The Easter holiday was a little colder than usual, but hat didn't dampen the enthusiasm of children collecting eggs at the annual Easter Egg Hunt Saturday. The hunt took place at the Romulus Senior Center on Bibbins Road, and was attended by hundreds of children. During the event, the Easter Bunny made his official arrival in the city before hopping along to deliver baskets.

Recreation center opening under way

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

Though the city of Romulus is touting an official April 1 opening at the new recreation facility, the activity is already under way at the new building.

Romulus Athletic Center personnel are busy signing up members from the city and from several other areas, and most are

impressed with the level of activity at the new center, said Councilman William Crova.

"I stopped off at the recreation center to take a look at he finished building and to see about a membership," he said. "I was very impressed."

As of this week, the facility located at Northline and Wayne roads is fully staffed and operational, but the management at the

facility hopes to sign up more residents at the grand opening, which is slated for April 1, said Mayor Alan Lambert.

"We had quite a few people there signing up for memberships," he said.

The Athletic Center is the first new municipal building constructed in the city in many years.

See **Recreation**, page 4

See **Airport**, page 4

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Stitch in time

Former resident's grandmother's quilts on exhibit

Meghan Chatham
Staff Writer

Tommie Hunter, a former area resident who moved to Alabama after retiring from the Ford Wayne Assembly Plant, enjoyed a visit to his past recently.

Tommie, his wife, Susie, and daughter, Tracy, joined his brother, Paul, and sister-in-law, Katie, for a trip back to Michigan. They came to view an exhibition of handmade quilts created by their grandmother, Susana Allen Hunter, on display at Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn.

Hunter grew up watching their grandmother create the quilts in her home in Wilcox County, Ala.

"She raised me," he said.

The family home had only two rooms, no running water, and no electricity. Keeping the family warm on cold nights was a concern since the house had no insulation and was not well heated.

Her quilting, Hunter said, was a hobby his grandmother allowed herself only during the winter. Entertainment options for a woman in rural Alabama were limited, and quilting was considered a practical way to pass the time. During the summer months, life on the family farm was simply too busy to allow time for such needlework, Hunter recalled.

"In the wintertime, she couldn't

do anything else," he said.

Day after day, he said, his grandmother would sit before her quilting frame—which was hung from the ceiling by four ropes—and hand-stitch together quilts for the family out of whatever materials were available. She used salvageable portions of worn out shirts and jeans and even flour and sugar sacks. They were filled using small pieces of cotton that couldn't, for one reason or another, be sent off to the cotton mill. Because it grew dark early, much of her work was done by the light of a kerosene lamp, he said.

Although the family always knew that Susana Hunter had done a lot of quilting, Susie Hunter said that they hadn't realized just how many quilts she had actually made until she was ready to move into their home in Mobile and her belongings needed to be packed up.

"There were at least 75 quilts," Susie Hunter said. The quilts dated from the 1930s to the 1970s.

The finds even explained an ongoing grumble her grandchildren had offered over the years.

"Our daughters always complained about jumping up onto the high bed," said Hunter.

"There were 20 quilts on the one bed," she said, adding that it had raised the height of the bed dramatically.



The visit to The Henry Ford was truly a family affair for brothers Tommie and Paul Hunter and their families. The exhibition marked the first time the family had seen the quilts created by their grandmother displayed since they were sold to the museum a few years ago.

After Susana Hunter died at 93, members of the family decided to contact The Henry Ford to see if the museum would be interested in purchasing—and preserving for posterity—some of the quilts. It did.

"They stand out because they are a wonderful, very creative use of 'found material'," said Jeanine Head Miller, curator of Domestic Life for the Henry Ford. "She literally made something beautiful out of nothing. These quilts were utilitarian and made to be used. Often times, many of these quilts didn't survive because they were used."

The quilts bear scant resemblance to the time-consuming traditional designs in which identically shaped pieces are brought together into a symmetrical whole. Instead, Miller said that they are much more improvisational as Hunter, like rural women throughout the South, created her own freeform designs to make pleasing use of the materials available and focused on strip-piecing to get the quilts completed more quickly than would otherwise be possible.

"They look very modern because they aren't bound by traditional constraints," said Miller.

"Some of them resemble modern art. It's absolutely inspirational about how people can make the most out of limited circumstances."

Tommie Hunter said that the chance to see his grandmother's handiwork—as much a part of her life as her outspoken nature or her love of hats—exhibited at the museum the family handpicked to care for them was welcome.

Hunter, along with a selection of other items from her household, are on display at Henry Ford Museum through April 27 as part of an exhibit called Quilting Genius 2: The Improvisational Quilts of Susana Hunter. The quilts on display are now part of the permanent collection although textiles are rarely displayed for any length of time due to conservation concerns.



Despite the modern art feel of many of the quilts, their creation was begun first and foremost to meet an everyday need.

"It's nice to see them on display—appreciated," he said. The nearly 30 quilts made by

For more information, contact the museum at (313) 982-6001 or visit www.TheHenryFord.org.

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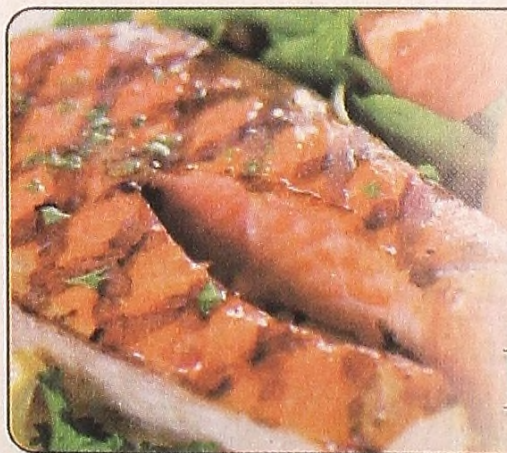
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Calendar of events

'Nitch' schedules benefit

A group that helps knit and sew blankets for needy residents is asking the public to help them raise money.

Nitch for the Needy, a group of crafters associated with the Ball Road Tabernacle Church in Romulus, has scheduled an all-you-can eat spaghetti dinner to generate money to fund group activities.

Alan Richards, the promotions director of Nitch for the Needy, said the condition of the local economy has placed several people in the area in dire straits.

"This (is a) community service event that will help us to help people in Romulus," he said. "Our organization works all year round, finding help for people in crisis and in need."

In addition to the spaghetti dinner, there will also be a bake sale and a buffet.

The dinner will take place from 5-8 p.m. on Saturday, April 12, at the church.

Ball Road Tabernacle Church is located at just off of Ecorse Road and Ball Road, west of Middlebelt Road.

Dinner tickets are \$7.50 at the door. Children younger than 6 can eat for \$3.50. Pre-ordered tickets are \$6.50.

All proceeds go to help needy families

For more information, call (734) 722-9638.

Library week scheduled

The Romulus Public Library has scheduled a series of events to mark National Library Week.

National Library Week takes place each year in April to honor the work and recognize the value of local libraries. This year, the Romulus Library has organized two reading events.

The first is an appearance by Grandma Green Bean the Clown, featuring Denise Gutenschwager, who will appear at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15.

The second is a puppet show featuring Mike Boynton, a puppeteer and executive assistant to Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano. Boynton's performance will take place at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 16.

Library Week is April 13-19.

The Romulus Public Library is located off Wayne Road, next to the Romulus City Hall.

For more information, call the library at (734) 942-7589.

Softball leagues forming

Men's Sunday Softball "D" leagues are organizing for the 2008 summer season.

Up to eight teams are needed to comprise the league, and games will take place at Elmer Johnson Park, which is located at 9755 Ozga Road.

Players need not be a resident to join a team.

Game times will take place at various times from noon to 8:45p.m. on varying days.

Registration fees are \$500 per team, or \$50 told hold an individual spot. Those fees include umpire fees, the 18-game schedule, and playoff and tournament awards given at the end of the season.

A manager's meeting will take place at 5 p.m. on May 12 at the recreation department.

The softball league is sponsored by Romulus Parks and Recreation.

For more information, call (734) 941-8665.

- Events are compiled by Staff Writer Molly Tippen. Information about events can be sent via e-mail to mtippen@journalgroup.com, or by fax at (734) 729-1840.

Student projects aid new shelter

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

A school requirement is giving the effort to build a new animal shelter in Romulus an unexpected boost this year.

Senior projects – a requirement for all graduating 12th graders attending Romulus High School – give students an opportunity to raise money or create awareness for a social cause. And this year, many students are organizing events to help fund a new shelter.

Justin Kuderik, a 17-year-old senior at Romulus High School, is one of those students.

"I chose the shelter because I knew a lot of people are working on it, and all of our animals at home are adopted," he said. "We have two cats and a chocolate lab. There are so many people who get to the point where they can't afford to feed their animals, and we just don't have the room to help all of them, and some of them get put down because of that."

The current Romulus shelter is a small, blighted building at Goddard Road. Councilman William Wadsworth, who has organized a grassroots effort to build a new shelter financed by monetary and in-kind donations for the past four years, said high school students have shown an

extraordinary interest in the effort.

"I've received calls from about five students this year seeking my blessing and asking for support," he said. "And of course, I try to help them in every way I can."

"This year, the number of students raising funds for the shelter will put us past the half-way mark," he said. "We'll likely have at least \$125,000 in the bank. We're glad to have (the students) help out."

Estimates indicate that a new shelter would cost \$250,000 to build. Wadsworth said that funds from individuals and businesses, as well as in-kind promises for labor, means that work can get started without necessarily having all of the money in hand.

A design for a shelter is also being devised by Ghafari & Associates, and a final plan has been approved, Wadsworth added. Wadsworth sought – and received – support from the Tax Increment Financing Authority (TIFA) board, but ground on the shelter has yet to be broken.

The new shelter will be located on a city-owned parcel of land on Northline Road, near the Department of Public Works Building. The new plan calls for many new amenities, including an adoption area and an improved



Justin Kuderik

storage area for supplies.

Small fundraisers – bowling events, card games, and restaurant events have helped fuel the effort and Wadsworth said the vast majority of support has come from small businesses in the area.

For now, Wadsworth is hoping more local businesses and students continue to embrace the animal shelter initiative.

"The more people that get involved, the better it is for us," he said.

Kuderik's fundraiser is a dinner benefit will take place from 5:30-8:30 p.m. on April 18 at the Romulus Senior Center. The senior center is located at 36525 Bibbins Road.

The cost for the event is \$7 for adults and \$5 for children. Kuderik advises supporters that tickets are best purchased before the event.

For tickets or more information, call (734) 624-1612.

Track

FROM PAGE 1

other."

Dueling plans

Officials from Magna Entertainment Group last year backed out of a deal to construct a \$100 million horseracing track, which was tentatively called Michigan Downs.

Magna officials informed the Office of the Racing Commissioner that they would no longer seek a racing permit for a Romulus location in August 2007.

The track was part of a "racino" concept for the vacant land surrounding Detroit Metropolitan Airport, and was a cornerstone to making Romulus an entertainment destination for all of Southeast Michigan. It was to be a companion project to the proposed casino and hotel, which is also in a holding pattern as federal approvals are sought.

The reason Magna gave for nixing the casino was lower-

than-expected earnings, which were announced to stockholders days before the company pulled out of the deal.

But late last year, Wayne County sold a parcel of land to Jerry Campbell, the operator who will open a horseracing track in Huron Township. Romulus officials felt thwarted, said Lambert.

"Of course we felt like we were undercut," he said. "I think the track would have worked better here – the land in Huron is a terrible parcel; there's no infrastructure on it."

Wayne County officials, who recognize a dire need for jobs, felt they had to act on new opportunities for growth in the county, said Vanessa Denha-Garmo, spokesperson for Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano.

"We are working with Romulus on various projects and potential economic development opportunities," she said.

"We are committed to Romulus. Regrettably, Magna entertainment gave up their racing license and interest in build-

ing a race track. An opportunity arose with Jerry Campbell; the race track will not only be an economic stimulus for the region, including Romulus, but the project is expected to create 1,100 jobs," she said.

"Huron Township has cooperated well with the county," said Denha-Garmo. "We appreciate their efforts to make this project work. There was no intention to circumvent Romulus. This was an opportunity we could not pass on."

Next moves

According to the Horse Racing Law of 1995, only three track licenses can be issued in the metro-Detroit area. The license given to Post-It was once held by Detroit Race Course. It was then granted to Magna, who relinquished it.

Magna is still working with the city to develop the parcel, and there is the possibility that a shopping center could be opened in the future.

Post It plans to have its first race in July 2008.

Airport

FROM PAGE 1

cated to make room for the runway.

The 350-unit Sky Harbor Apartments would have to be demolished, along with 30 improved industrial buildings, 18 improved commercial buildings, the Halecreek fire station, the Oakbrook subdivision, Merriman Elementary School, and possibly Halecreek School.

About 800 residences would be demolished, and the city could stand to lose almost \$1 million in assessed revenue, according to the city. The Romulus Community School District could lose \$1.7 million.

The city would also be about 7 percent smaller, and could lose about 3,500 residents.

Underground or aboveground monorail systems would be added to transport travelers and employees around the airport grounds by 2013.

Governmental involvement

Romulus, because of the displacement of individuals and businesses and the resulting loss of revenue that could occur, opposes the airport plan, along with several other communities concerned about noise and air traffic in the area.

Airport officials have said they commissioned the master plan to prepare for the future, and that it would be neglectful for them as airport managers not have an approved plan in place if and when it is needed.

At the Monday night Romulus City Council meeting, Councilman LeRoy Burcroff said he believed a delegation of communities speak-

ing out caused the airport authority to look at their plan again.

"We had several representatives from other communities, including the mayor of Inkster, and many others who came out and supported us," he said. "We definitely appreciate their support and thank them for coming to the meeting."

Airport authority representatives have complained that they were not permitted to speak at the forum March 11 at Merriman School.

"It was not a good forum for them to speak at, and we told them that before the meeting," said Tim Keyes, city economic development director.

"It wasn't a surprise at the last minute."

Keyes and Lambert said they would welcome the airport authority CEO Lester Robinson, to speak at a city council meeting as a petitioner, however.

Recreation

FROM PAGE 1

The \$18 million building was formerly a warehouse facility owned by the Overhead Crane Co. The project was financed by Tax Increment Finance Authority funds.

The facility, when it opens, will have a main gym, a teen gym, nautilus equipment, an Olympic-sized pool, a kiddie pool, a hot tub, a fountain-like pool, a one-tenth-mile track, a rock climbing wall, rest and relaxation areas, a banquet hall, a café and meeting rooms.

The 89,000 square foot facility features an 8,000 square foot workout area with treadmills, elliptical machines, bicycles and free weights.

The city was hoping for a 2007 opening, but backorders on the tile in the swimming areas, and some other unexpected issues, delayed the opening of the center.

At the site Tuesday, it appeared some outdoor landscaping was still under way.

Romulus City Council members last week approved a management agreement with Virginia-based Rink Management to operate all aspects of the facility. Rink hired nearly 100 employees to man the center.

County seeks green fair site

Andrea King
Staff Writer

The Wayne County Fairgrounds in Belleville could be the next to go green.

In an effort to cut costs and help to save the environment, members of the Wayne County Fair Association are proposing a solar plan to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and lower the level of carbon emission they produce.

"The idea in general is to solarize most of the fairgrounds, if we can, and do it in increments," said Dave Sauers, who is spearheading the initiative.

"As we all know, man kind has abused the environment due to his lack of knowledge and the false sense that the supply of fossil fuel was never ending. As the natural resources become overcome from this dependency, we need to seek out other ways to produce the energy we need to live," he added. "If we can't do something for the grounds now it won't be here in 10 years."

The plan includes: reviewing the total energy requirements; lowering energy waste through replacing old energy wasting equipment; energy metering and replacing lighting to new technology illumination tubes; implementing a solar introduction through a design plan for solar photovoltaic, solar hot water and biofuel systems; a recycling plan designed to reuse compost waste; green recovery, brown recovery, paper product waste, hard waste, like cans, glass and wood and a rain water recovery system and farming techniques to tolerant planting; organic production; using less water for irrigation and the proper use of non-organic fertilizers.

Frank Rochowiak, president of the Wayne County Fair Association Board of Directors, said the start is to do simple things.

"Putting in solar tubes for daylight and parking lights with solar panels, those are some; it's going to be an experiment," he said. "We're looking at all the things that can be done and trying to go high-tech."

Not only will a major benefit be saving the environment, but there would be major cost savings in utilizes, too, Sauers said.

Since 1946—when the fairgrounds was founded—the price of a barrel of crude oil has climbed to over \$100, which is 90 percent more now to run the fairgrounds, he added.

"That year the cost of electric was about \$.01 per kilowatt hour, but as we consume natural resources at an alarming rate. We need to stop the wasting so old mother earth can keep our future and the future of generations to come," said Sauers. "It costs over \$9,200 to light our four buildings for one year, that means that these four buildings use 16-27 times their footprint. All this is based on today's costs, but if you factor in a third increase, you'll be facing an annual cost of \$12,236 or more."

"The solar plan can reduce the overall energy footprint by 50 percent or more within a few years," he added.

"This amounts to reducing electric cost to less than \$6,200 per year. Just think of what we can do with the savings."

To help with their initiative, they are filing for a \$50,000 grant to help fund the solar plan system to generate electricity, which they hope to find out shortly after April 4 if they will receive the funds, Rochowiak said.

"Our utilities run over \$20,000 a year at the fairgrounds so we're looking at ways to reduce that through solar conservation," he said. "We're looking at ways to use the sun so we don't have to rely on foreign oil."

OPINION

Our disappointment outweighs our surprise

Disappointed, but not surprised.

That's how Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick characterized his reaction to the eight felony counts that were levied against him by Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthly on Monday.

It probably characterizes the reaction of many throughout the greater Detroit region, too, from local elected officials to residents of both the cities and the suburbs.

Disappointed, but not surprised. It certainly reflects our opinion of the way this whole thing played out and it highlights a few things we should consider as our state is once again dragged through the mud for a situation none of us could have foreseen; it's another black eye for a state that has suffered through a single-state recession, the threat of a virtual government shut-down last year and the debacle of the presidential primary just a few months ago.

We should all be disappointed, but not surprised about the mayor's long line of defenses: first blame rumors and innuendo, then the media, finally the great city-suburb divide and then the 'race card.'

”

We should all be disappointed but not surprised that his arrogance and apparently selfish behavior has cast a shadow over the state as a whole.

We should all be disappointed but not surprised that his arrogance and apparently selfish behavior has cast a shadow over the state as a whole. This is not the kind of national spotlight we need here as we're trying to rebuild our image—particularly the image of our largest city, which features new attractions in the form of cutting edge sports arenas and glitzy casinos.

Talk about the scandal and its implications were prevalent throughout western Wayne County—as they were, no doubt,

in states across the nation after the story lead off broadcasts on CNN, both televised and on the internet.

It's no wonder, either: The fate of Michigan follows closely the reputation of Detroit, and the fate of the suburbs even more so. We're all trying to attract development, bring jobs into the community—or at least keep them from leaving—and this situation isn't going to help things.

It brings up another thing to think about, too, as we head into a campaign season where many state and local offices are up for election. Take a look around your community and the people who serve on a local level. Sure, you'll find a few with egos a little too big for their proverbial britches; you'll find a hobbyist here or there that may be in it to put it on a resume. You might find a few personality clashes based on party affiliations or things like that, too. By and large, though, the people who serve us do it for the right reasons, a commitment to the community, to the ideal that they can make their hometown better than it was.

That's one thing we can learn from this. And we don't have to be surprised or disappointed about it, either.

Downtown legislation will help

The Michigan Senate approved legislation this week that will make it easier for downtowns to help themselves.

The legislation, co-sponsored by State Sen. Glenn Anderson (D-Westland), will allow Downtown Development Authority (DDA) boards to create, operate and fund loan programs for building improvements within downtown districts.

It's a good step for many reasons.

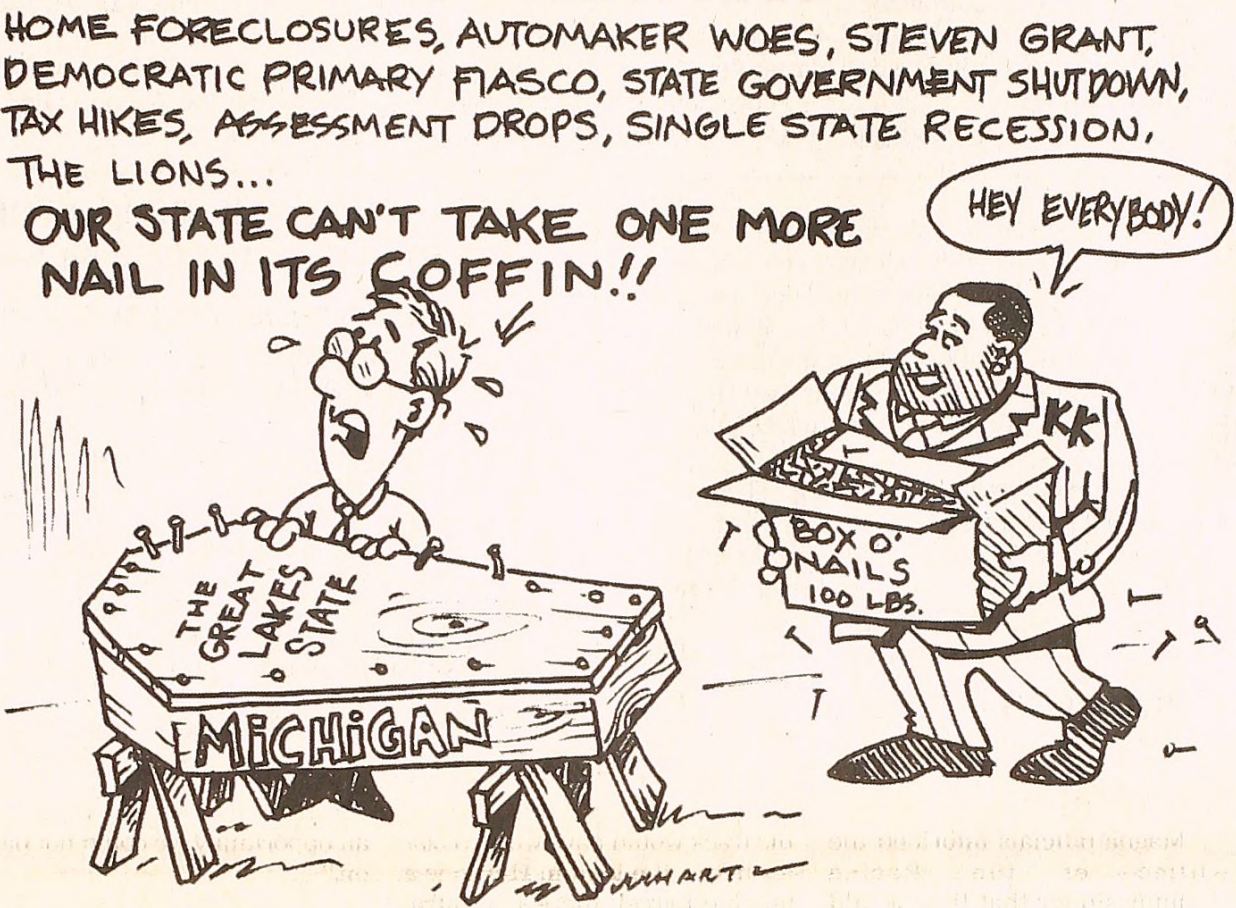
First of all, most DDAs already offer some kind of business assistance grants. Some provide a 50/50 match for business improvements. Others allow a stipend for consultants or architectural services, still others help business owners get low-interest loans to fund large scale improvements.

But let's face it, DDAs need all the help they can get. Any tool in the box could be the one that will help bring a new business or service to town or keep one from moving out. And, if the current state of the economy is any indicator, most municipalities are generally on their own in this endeavor.

The reputation and success of any community is generally dependent on its downtown area. These businesses tend to be smaller, family-owned firms that don't have the deep wallets of some of the bigger box stores, either. Any help they can get to spread their dollars will provide a long-term benefit to the community in the form of a more vibrant downtown.

The importance of that can't be underscored, either. A busy downtown, filled with a variety of shops, is generally a safer one, too, because there are more eyes keeping track of what's going on. And a safe, thriving downtown will only help properly values throughout the community.

The current trend is toward more urban development, pedestrian friendly downtowns and the like. This legislation will help bring that about, and provide incentive to polish the already sparkling jewels many of us visit every day.



Success sprouts on the farm

There is still snow on the ground and a nip in the air, but it already felt like spring at the Maybury Farm.

I took a trip out there on Friday to meet the new farm team, Laura Roberts and Phil Lowery, who have been hard at work for months in preparation for the spring opening.

Roberts is a veterinary student in charge of looking after all the animals. Lowery has an agricultural degree; a crop farmer from near Mansfield, OH, he moved to Michigan last year and started work at Maybury in January. I was impressed with him before I talked more than five minutes; he not only knows his stuff, but he has plenty of good ideas for the farm this year.

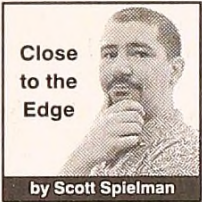
You an already see signs of them, too. There are different kinds of animals—a miniature donkey, a peacock and some chickens that go beyond the typical white and red variety. You'll find a new mascot, too, when you go there—a huge horse named Max

that stands 18 hands tall.

Lowery has plans to expand the grazing area at the farm, which will spread out the animals more, giving them more room to exercise and giving visitors more room to roam, too. He wants to grow their own feed—dramatically cutting down costs—and put on more demonstrations for visitors than have been possible in the past.

His vision of the farm, as a sort of historic throwback we can all visit to take a breather from the hustle and bustle of every day life, really appealed to me, too. It's an easy thing to imagine, even while you're standing on a frozen field with the sound of roosters crowing in the background.

This will be an important spring for the farm, both literally and figuratively. There's still some negative feelings out there that have lingered since



See Farm, page 6

Soccer may be the new spring season sport of choice

Spring sports starts in full force next week and what season it should be.

Soccer, baseball, softball, tennis, golf, track—and for some lucky schools—lacrosse teams will hit the fields, courses and tracks starting on Monday.

That is, if the weather ever

decides to cooperate. Plymouth, Canton, Salem and Belleville high schools have already rescheduled soccer games due to the sloppy and inclement weather last week.

I can't and don't blame them. Soccer players are tough, but I wouldn't want to run around in shorts when it's 35 degrees and raining—or snowing.

Snow! Can you believe that? Ho, ho, ho—Happy Easter.

Well, since we're on the topic of soccer, I have to admit it is quickly becoming a warm(er)-weather favorite in the cheap seats.

There's plenty of action if you can see it across the expansive green field. There's running—lots and lots of running—jumping, bumping, sliding and tackling. More running. It's like hockey on grass without skates and sticks and on a playing surface about four times the size.

What's not to like?

While the boys play more aggressive in the fall, the girls are a lot more graceful in the spring.

The Western Lakes Activities Association (WLAA) is as tough of a conference as any fan or player will find in the state of Michigan. Northville and Canton are easily the elite teams in the conference but

”

Snow!

Can you believe that?

Ho, ho, ho

—Happy Easter.

Salem, Plymouth and the Livonia teams are always nipping at the Mustangs' and Chiefs' heels.

The Lady Mustangs will be right back up at the top.

Coach Ron Meteyer only graduated four seniors. The most notable was Danielle Toney, who was the team's leading scorer. She took her skills to Penn State. That leaves about 20 returning players with tons and tons of talent for the 2008 campaign. Look for them to make it far in the state tournament after clinching division, conference and district championships.

Canton lost more seniors but don't count them out. The team, under the guidance of George Tomasso, should have another stellar year. I'll just hope that Tomasso actually calls me back this season.

The same goes for the squads at Salem and Plymouth under the watchful eyes of Joe Nora and Jeff

Neschich who only lost three and five seniors respectively.

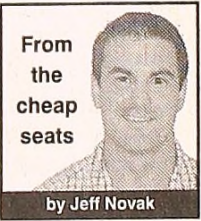
The question is: who will step up and dethrone Novi?

Unfortunately, Wayne and John Glenn are still struggling to make a mark in the WLAA soccer.

Wayne Coach Evan Baker has made strides with the Zebra program while Glenn Coach Jerry Poniatowski's experience is unmatched. Both Glenn and Wayne lack the numbers to be competitive in the WLAA but, who knows, this could be the year where all that changes.

The other two teams in Journal World, Belleville and Romulus, will compete in the Mega Conferences. Belleville's father-and-son coaching duo Ron and Brent Held and Romulus Coach Joel Hockin will have their work cut out for them but both teams will make a good run at a conference championship this year.

If you're looking for a break from the traditional spring favorites like baseball and softball, try pulling up a cheap seat—weather permitting—and enjoy the fast-paced game of soccer this season. I know I will. See ya there.



JOURNAL

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Ofc. Shawn Hines

Benefit planned to aid stricken officer

Molly Tippen
Staff Writer

Ofc. Shawn Hines worked to help the citizens of Inkster as an Inkster police patrolman for several years.

But now, the second-generation police officer needs a helping hand himself, and it's coming from the people he worked with every day.

Hines, who was stricken with cancer two years ago, will be the subject of a fundraiser to help him and his family meet some basic

expenses incurred as the result of the officer's illness.

The fundraiser was organized by the Inkster Motor Unit, a special unit of motorcycle officers that patrol the roadways in the city.

The motor unit also handles several fundraisers, said Ofc. John Hankins, a member of the unit.

"It takes tenacity to be part of the motor unit," he said. "We've showed that same tenacity with the fundraisers."

"Shawn was always a very respectful young man," he said. "He's a good person, and we knew

we wanted to help him."

Hines has been off work for several weeks for treatment. According to his brother, Dwight Hines, he was not able to do an interview at this time with The Ledger-Star.

During his years with Inkster, Hines worked as a patrolman. Prior to working in Inkster, Hines had worked for the Wayne County Sheriff's Department. He had followed his father, Charlie Hines, into the 70-officer department.

Police Chief Gregory Gaskin said, "Shawn has an illness that is

beyond his control and he's out of sick time but he still has a family to support and we wanted to help him out as much as possible."

During the benefit, supporters will gather at 6 p.m. at the Lyskawa Veteran's of Foreign Wars Hall, 6828 Waverly St., in Dearborn Heights on April 4. The event will continue until 1 a.m.

Tickets cost \$20 per person, and all proceeds from the fundraiser will go to Hines and his family.

For more information, call the Inkster Police Department at (313) 563-9850.

Police seek suspect in abduction of woman

Scott Spielman
Editor

Wayne police are hoping the community will help them find a man who kidnapped a 7-11 employee at gunpoint earlier this month.

The incident took place at about 3:30 a.m. on March 16 at the 7-11 store on Annapolis Avenue, according to Det. Sgt. Darryl Rize. He said the suspect may have entered the store twice before he abducted the

woman.

"He was (scared) off twice by other customers," Rize said. "When he came into the store the third time he forced her to leave the store and get into his car at gunpoint."

The suspect drove the victim a few miles, before she leapt from the moving car near Annapolis and Merriman Road—breaking her kneecap in the process.

"The car wasn't moving at a high

”

We've received some tips, but they haven't panned out yet.

rate of speed, but it was a pretty daring thing on her part," Rize said.

Police have video of the suspect and have released a sketch, as well.

He is described as a light-skinned black man, about 5 feet, 10 inches tall and weighing 170 pounds. He wore dark clothing and a blue baseball cap with earflaps. The car was a four door sedan, either gold or silver in color.

"We've received some tips, but they haven't panned out yet," said Police Chief John Williams.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Wayne police at (734) 721-1414.



Police hope a sketch of a man suspected of abducting a 7-11 employee will generate additional tips.

Farm

FROM PAGE 5

John Beemer, the farmer who oversaw the operation of the farm since it reopened—and for about 25 years before the fire—was let go.

I have to admit, I'm not sure why that has still gone on. Sure, he was a popular guy, but if there weren't verifiable reasons for his departure, he wouldn't have been denied

unemployment by state investigators—twice. I can't remember during my time covering a community where a personnel decision garnered so much ink. People complain about the way the farm was run at the same time they protest the ousting of the person who oversaw it. It doesn't make much sense to me.

It's time to move on, though. The new team has plenty of good ideas. The farm will be even better this year, I have no doubt. It will again be a popular place for the community, as long as we let the seeds grow.

CITY OF ROMULUS NOTICE PUBLIC HEARING PROPOSED FY 2008/2009 BUDGET

Notice is hereby given that the Romulus City Council has scheduled a Public Hearing to be held Monday, May 5, 2008 at 6:30 p.m. in the Romulus City Hall Council Chambers, 11111 Wayne Road, Romulus, Michigan 48174-1485 for the purpose of discussing the FY 2008/2009 Budget, including "The Property Tax Millage Rate Proposed To Be Levied to Support The Proposed Budget Will Be a Subject of This Hearing." Said Budget is available for inspection in the Clerk's Office, Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Linda R. Choate, CMC, Clerk
City of Romulus, Michigan

THIS IS OPEN MEETING!

Publish: March 27, 2008

NOTICE CITY OF ROMULUS

NOTICE OF LAST DAY OF REGISTRATION OF THE QUALIFIED ELECTORS OF THE CITY OF ROMULUS AND THE ROMULUS COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT COUNTY OF WAYNE, MICHIGAN FOR THE SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION TO BE HELD TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2008.

To the qualified Electors of the City of Romulus, County of Wayne, State of Michigan:

Notice is hereby given that, in conformity with the "Michigan Election Laws," I, the undersigned City Clerk, will upon any day EXCEPT Sunday, a legal holiday, and the day of any regular or special election, shall receive for registration the name of any resident not registered, who may APPLY for such registration EXCEPT during the time intervening between the CLOSE of Registration for the General Election and the day of such election.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that voter registrations will be taken at any Secretary of State branch office or, in the Office of the City Clerk, 11111 Wayne Road, Romulus, Michigan 48174-1485 between the hours of:

Monday thru Friday - 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

AND THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER

Monday, April 7, 2008 - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

For the purpose of REVIEWING THE REGISTRATION LIST AND REGISTERING such of the qualified electors that shall properly apply, therefore, the name of no person but an ACTUAL RESIDENT of the City of Romulus, at the time of registration, and entitled under the Constitution, if remaining such resident, to vote at the next election shall be entered on the registration list.

Each person registering must possess the following qualifications:

1. Must be a citizen of the United States.
2. Must be 18 years of age on or before May 6, 2008.
3. Must be a resident of the State of Michigan for a least 30 days and a resident of the City of Romulus.

TWO (2) FOUR (4) YEAR TERMS

This Notice is given by order of the City of Romulus and the Board of Education of Romulus Community School, County of Wayne, Michigan.

Linda R. Choate, CMC, Clerk
City of Romulus, Michigan

Publish: March 27, 2008

THE CITY OF ROMULUS REQUEST TO RECEIVE BIDS FOR THE FOLLOWING:

- Bid 07/08-22 Playground Slides - Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Bid 07/08- 23 Tennis Court Fence - EJ Park
- Bid 07/08-24 Ram Extrication Tool - RFD

The City of Romulus, Michigan is seeking bids from qualified vendors for the above item/s and/or service/s.

Qualified individuals and firms wishing to submit bids must do so on forms provided by the City. Bid forms and specifications may be obtained from Lynn A. Conway, Purchasing Agent, 11111 Wayne Road, Romulus, Michigan, by calling (734) 955-4568 or by emailing Iconway@ci.romulus.mi.us or under Departments, in the Purchasing Department from the City of Romulus Web Site, <http://ci.romulus.mi.us>.

Bids must be submitted in sealed envelopes and returned to the City Clerk's Office no later than 3:00 p.m., Wednesday, April 16, 2008.

BID ENVELOPES MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED WITH THE BID NUMBER AND NAME AND BE ADDRESSED TO:

BID #
CITY OF ROMULUS CLERK'S OFFICE
11111 Wayne Road,
Romulus, Michigan, 48174

- (1) At approximately 3:15 p.m. bids received shall be publicly opened and read
- (2) The City reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals and to waive technicalities.

Publish: March 27, 2008

NOTICE OF CLOSE OF REGISTRATION FOR ELECTION - TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2008 LINCOLN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOLS

To the Qualified Electors of CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN- WAYNE COUNTY FOR RESIDENTS RESIDING IN LINCOLN CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT ONLY

Notice is hereby given that Monday, April 7, 2008 is the last day to register to vote or change your address for the above stated election.

If you are not currently registered to vote or have changed your address in the above stated jurisdiction in which you live, you may do so at the following locations and times listed in this notice.

Qualified electors may also register to vote or change their address in the following manners:

In Person:

- At the township clerk's office or at the office of any county clerk during normal business hours.
- At any of the Secretary of State Branch offices located throughout the state during normal business hours.
- At the specified agency for clients receiving services through the Family Independence Agency, the Department of Community Health, Michigan Jobs Commission and some offices of the Commission for the Blind.
- At the military recruitment offices for persons enlisting in the armed forces.

By Mail:

By obtaining and completing a Mail Voter Registration Application and forwarding to the election official as directed on the application by the close of registration deadline. Mail voter registration applications may be obtained by contacting:

JOANNIE D. PAYNE, CLERK
734.699.8909
46425 TYLER RD.
VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP, MI 48111

Qualifications for Registration

1. Applicant is at least 18 years of age.
2. Resident of Van Buren Township for at least 30 days.
3. Citizen of the United States.

Note:

A Person who registers to vote by mail is required to vote in person unless they have previously voted in person in the city/township where they live or are at least 60 years of age or are handicapped.

Applications for Absentee Voter Ballots are available at the Clerk's Office. The deadline for filing an application to receive an Absentee Ballot for the May 6, 2008 Election is Saturday, May 3, 2008 from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Clerk's office.

Joannie D. Payne, CMC
Township Clerk

Publish: March 27, 2008

Township grants ‘green’ tax abatement request

Andrea King
Staff Writer

A Van Buren Township firm will save some green in their attempts to help the auto industry go green.

Ricardo Inc. will invest more than \$2 million in Van Buren Township to develop a battery systems development center; according to Township Supervisor Cindy King. Township officials recently approved an eight-year, 50 percent tax abatement for the company to do so, which translates into a smaller tax payment, she said.

“That means instead of \$2,142 in taxes, they will pay about \$1,071 in township taxes per year,” said King.

Ricardo, which has an exiting Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate that will expire in 2011, will establish a hybrid and electric vehicle battery pack development and testing facility. It’s expected to create 32 new jobs directly at the company and about 16 spin-off jobs, officials said.

This is the first part of a second part expansion, King said.

“The second part expansion is dependent upon how successful the first one is,” she said. “I think it’s nice to have a company be able to expand at all, though, in these economic times,” she added.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm said Ricardo is one of the many companies that the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) is helping to grow. Combined, the projects are expected to create and retain a total of 6,066 jobs for about \$195 million of new capital investment in the state.

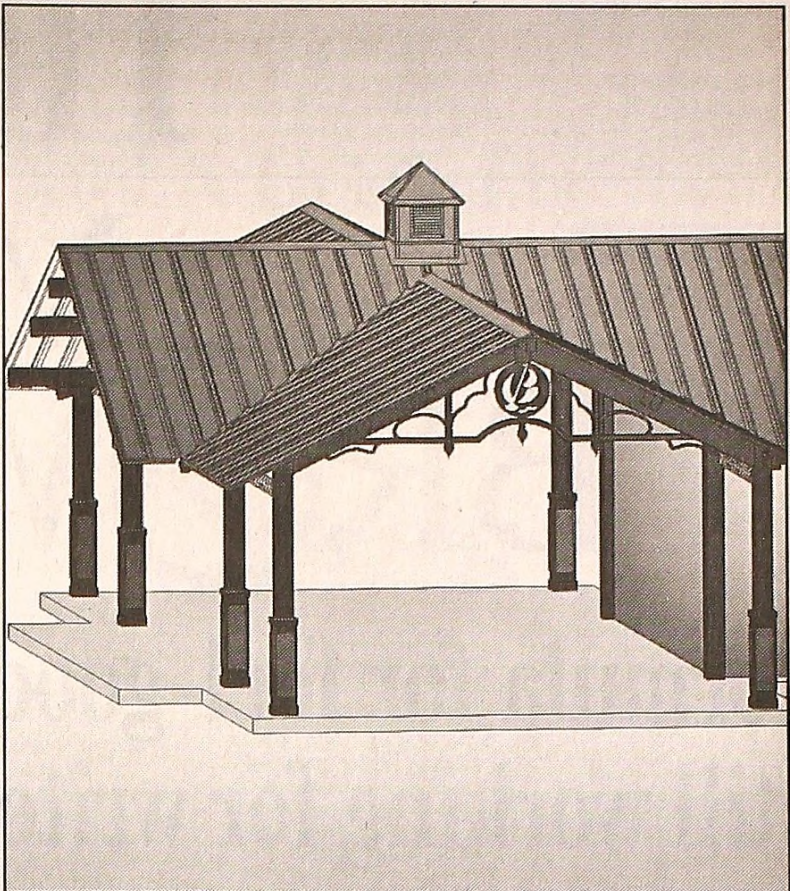
“Our aggressive economic strategy is attracting new job-creating investments from growing companies in every industry, from alternative energy and advanced manufacturing to financial services and food processing,” said Granholm. “As these businesses choose Michigan, they send a message that we’re a great place for other companies to do business and create jobs, too.”

Besides Ricardo, others include: Sakti3 in Ann Arbor, MyBuys Inc. in Ann Arbor, ArvinMeritor Inc. in

Detroit, North American Bancard Inc. in Troy, the Brose Group in Auburn Hills and Brose Jefferson in Warren, Hotel Holdings Monroe LLC in Grand Rapids, Two West Fulton LLC in Grand Rapids, Boar’s Head Provisions Co. Inc. in Holland Township, Paragon Metals Inc. in Quincy, the Leelanau County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority and the City of Southfield Redevelopment Authority.

In the 2007 State of the State address, Granholm emphasized the importance of making Michigan a global economic powerhouse in the 21st century. Since January 2005, she and the MEDC have announced the creation or retention of more than 226,000 jobs as a result of the groups assistance, officials said.

“All of these projects are the result of successful state and local collaboration and teamwork with our economic development partners around the state to bring these projects to Michigan against some very stiff competition,” said James Epolito, president of the MEDC.



A look ahead

Bid specification documents for the Riggs Heritage Park phase one plans were approved recently by the Van Buren Township Board of Trustees. The project has been scheduled for funding from the Wayne County Parks millage grant with a budget of \$600,000. It will include: recreational trails, a pavilion with respite station (pictured) and other site amenities at the Martinsville and the Huron River Drive site.

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES MARCH 18, 2008

Supervisor King called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor King, Clerk Payne, Treasurer Budd, Trustee Clair, Trustee Hart, Trustee Jahr and Trustee Rochowiak. Absent and excused: None. Others in attendance: Planning and Economic Development Director Kelley, Parks and Recreation Director Ross, DPW Director Knepper, Parks Manager Mulkey, Public Safety Director Champagne, Chief Nicholai, Captain Brooks, Captain Laurain, Executive Assistant Ireland, Secretary Cline and an audience of twenty-two (22).

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: Hart moved, Rochowiak seconded to open the public hearing to receive public comments on establishing Industrial Development District #21. Carried.

Supervisor King opened the public hearing stating this public hearing is for creating Industrial Development District #21 and is a prerequisite to considering the tax abatement. The second public hearing is, for the eight-year Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate more commonly known as a tax abatement: Executive Assistant Ireland stated the applicant Ricardo Inc. currently has an Industrial Development District and tax abatement across the street from this site and this request for the new district is for an expansion to Ricardo, Inc. The size of the new district is 4.12 acres and the location is I-275, Ricardo Drive and Samuel Barton Drive. Director Kelley stated Ricardo, Inc. is an established business in Van Buren Township. Originally the company was in the business of testing engines and expanded into engine design. This project expands business to include a battery test center for automobiles. Planning Commission approval is not required because the existing footprint will not increase by more than 10 percent. Ricardo Inc. received a Michigan Economic Growth Authority (MEGA) grant from the state of Michigan today. Executive Assistant Ireland stated Ricardo, Inc. is requesting \$347,500 in real property and \$654,000 in personal property (equipment) equating to yearly \$1,070.95 in taxes paid to the township. Currently Ricardo, Inc. pays roughly \$59,000 annually to the township for taxes (noting this will increase when the current tax abatement expires in December 30, 2011). The current request is for three and half percent of Ricardo’s total assessed value. This is phase one of a two phase project. There are no environmental issues for this project. The applicant is in compliance with their yearly reporting requirements to the township on their current tax abatement. Trustee Hart requested the applicant provide an overview of the company. The applicant’s representative stated Ricardo, Inc. is a global company and is a global management and technical consulting firm with a multi-industry client base listing examples from strategic consulting, vehicle engineering, controls and electronics, driveline and transmission engineering, heavy and light duty engineering, software development and support, advanced technology for fuel economy, and emissions and vehicle electrification (hybrid vehicles). Also Ricardo, Inc. is assisting the EPA in Ann Arbor as a technical advisor for the future corporate average fuel economy (CAFÉ) fuel consumption regulations. He further detailed the battery project system with three battery test cells to be located in the test facility. Supervisor King stated this project will bring 21 new jobs with an average base salary of \$90,000 per year.

There were no comments from the audience.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made to close the public hearing.

Hart moved, Payne seconded to close the public hearing. Carried.

Clair moved, Jahr seconded to open the public hearing to receive public comments on request for an Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate for Ricardo, Inc. Carried.

Supervisor King opened the public hearing stating most of information was covered during the first public hearing. The request is for the township board to adopt a resolution acknowledging the establishment of the developmental district and separate resolution granting eight year tax abatement is the result of Van Buren Township Tax Abatement Application completed by the applicant and is scored on a point system. Supervisor King reviewed the Ricardo, Inc. application as follows: the cost of proposed project or improvements, a new project for the company, expanding from within Van Buren Township, the firm applying for abatement owns the land on which it plans to locate, number of new jobs created, types of jobs skilled and/or professional or unskilled, noise impacts, outside storage, impacts on storm water, air quality and hazardous material storage. The score was 70.5 qualifying for eight year tax abatement. Further in order for the township to consider the tax abatement the board must also approve an agreement that sets forth the terms between the company and the township. The agreement was discussed during Work Study and a revised page 2 with additional language of “or through the life of the abatement,” be added to item b) Consequences of Non-Compliance with Project Objectives, of the agreement.

There were no comments from Board members or the audience.

There being no further discussion, a motion was made to close the public hearing.

Budd moved, Hart seconded to close the public hearing. Carried.

MINUTES: Rochowiak moved, Hart seconded to approve the Work Study Session Minutes of March 3, 2008 as presented. Carried.

Clair moved, Hart seconded to approve the Closed Session Minutes of March 3, 2008 as presented. Carried.

Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2008 as presented. Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Parks Manager Mulkey introduced Linda Walter, Vice President of the Michigan Parks and Recreation Association who presented Parks and Recreation

Director Bruce Ross with a plaque honoring his year of service as President of the Michigan Parks and Recreation Association.

Supervisor King acknowledged the following new employees. Four new on-call fire fighters Christopher Scott Gootee, Timothy Queen, Todd Sorrell and Bruce Van Gemert; Police Reserve Officer David Klamerus; and Public Safety Dispatcher Daniel Antieau.

Jack Pete, Community Services Manager for AAA along with the Michigan Chiefs of Police and State of Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning presented the Traffic Unit consisting of Sergeant Yono, Officer Harrison and Officer Buxton with the award for Excellence and Traffic Safety Program for the second year in a row.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS: Budd moved, Jahr seconded to adopt Resolution 2008-08 establishing Industrial Development District #21. Carried.

Hart moved, Rochowiak seconded to adopt Resolution 2008-09 authorizing an Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate for Ricardo, Inc., and to authorize the Supervisor and Clerk to execute the Tax Abatement Agreement. Carried.

Clair moved, Jahr seconded to adopt Resolution 2008-11 the transfer of Class C Liquor License from Applebee’s of Michigan to Applebee’s Mid-Atlantic LLC. Carried.

Payne moved, Jahr seconded to adopt Resolution 2008-12 regarding the proposed Detroit Metro Airport Master Plan. Carried.

Clair moved, Rochowiak seconded to approve the Lawn Maintenance Contract with Gonczy’s Property Maintenance for 2008 with option to renew in 2009, and to authorize the Supervisor and Clerk to execute the contract. Carried.

VOUCHER LIST: Budd moved, Hart seconded to approve the March 18, 2008 voucher list as presented. Carried.

REPORTS: Supervisor King ordered the January 2008 Budgetary Report received and filed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Belleville Area Museum is hosting the annual Quilt Exhibit “Patches & Patterns” through March 29th.

On Saturday, April 5th a joint trip sponsored by Belleville Area Historical Society, The Friends of the Fred C. Fischer Library, The Belleville Area Council for the Arts and the Van Buren Township Parks and Recreation Department for a spring trip to Detroit’s Pewabic Pottery. For more information call the museum at 734-697-1944.

The 2008 HUG (Help Unity Grow) will be held on April 19th at 8:00 a.m. at Belleville High School.

Clerk Payne announced the redistricting of the voting precincts is completed and has been approved by the State of Michigan. All registered voters in Van Buren Township will be receiving a new voter registration card. If you have any questions contact the Clerk’s Office at 734.699.8909.

Lincoln Consolidated School District will have an election on Tuesday, May 6, 2008. Van Buren Township has one precinct with Lincoln Consolidated School voters. This voting location has changed from Belleville High School to South Middle School. Also, there has been discussion of a June 3rd re-do presidential primary election.

On March 21st the administrative offices at Township Hall will be closed in observance of Good Friday.

Treasurer Budd stated the township tax records have been balanced and delivered to Wayne County Treasurer and thanked her staff Deputy Treasurer Bellingham, Account Clerk Partridge and Account Clerk Hunter for their assistance.

Treasurer Budd announced the Drive Thru Dog Clinic will take place on Saturday, May 10th from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Water and Sewer Building.

The Recreation Department announced the following events: Open registration has begun for summer day camp. Four camps will be held, Tot Camp, Day Camp, Tween Camp and Club Teen. On Sunday, May 4th a Mother/Daughter Tea Party will be held at Van Buren Township in the Community Center and on Friday, May 9th the annual Mother/Son Bowl will be held at Lodge Lanes. Registration is required for both of these events. For further information on classes and events contact the Recreation Department at 734.699.8921.

On March 29th the First Annual Rotary Euchre Championship beginning at 7:00 p.m. will be held at the Belleville Moose Lodge located on 831 East Huron River Drive. For more information contact Joyce Rochowiak at 313.304.0474 or Rob Coutts at 734.699.8079.

AUDIENCE (Non-Agenda Items): A resident voiced his opinion regarding the article in a local newspaper by the Van Buren Schools Superintendent.

CLOSED SESSION: None.

ADJOURNMENT: Hart moved, Payne seconded to adjourn at 8:57 p.m. Carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Joannie D. Payne, CMC
Township Clerk

Cindy C. King
Supervisor

Publish: March 27, 2008

THE SCENE

MEET THE BROWNS

Formula for feel-good films still working for writer, director

Reviewed By
Lester L. Holmes, Jr.
Staff Writer

After surprising critics with one of the most successful movies in 2007 with *Why Did I Get Married*, playwright, producer and director Tyler Perry continues his streak of turning his stage plays into successful films with his latest movie *Meet the Browns*.

Meet the Browns starts with Brenda, a single mother of three children played by Angela Bassett (*What's Love Have to Do With It*, *Akeelah and the Bee*) running through an inner city Chicago neighborhood to catch a bus to go to work. When she arrives at her destination, she discovers that her employer has closed down shop and moved operations to Mexico.

To make matters worse, Brenda receives a letter from her family in Georgia informing her of the death of her estranged father, a man she has never met. After several days of job searching and an unsuccessful attempt to collect

financial support from the father of her oldest child, Brenda is coaxed by one of her friends to take the trip to Georgia to pay her respects and become familiar with the Brown family.

While in Georgia, Brenda experiences the emotional ups and downs of being introduced to a family during a period of bereavement.

Her presence brings to light a period of her father's life that her siblings had no knowledge about. And unfortunately, some animosity.

The Georgia trip also reintroduces Brenda to Harry (Rick Fox) a basketball coach and scout who was in Chicago to scout her older son, who is a professional prospect.

Harry is a family friend of Browns and lives in the same town.

After the funeral, Brenda is shocked to discover that her

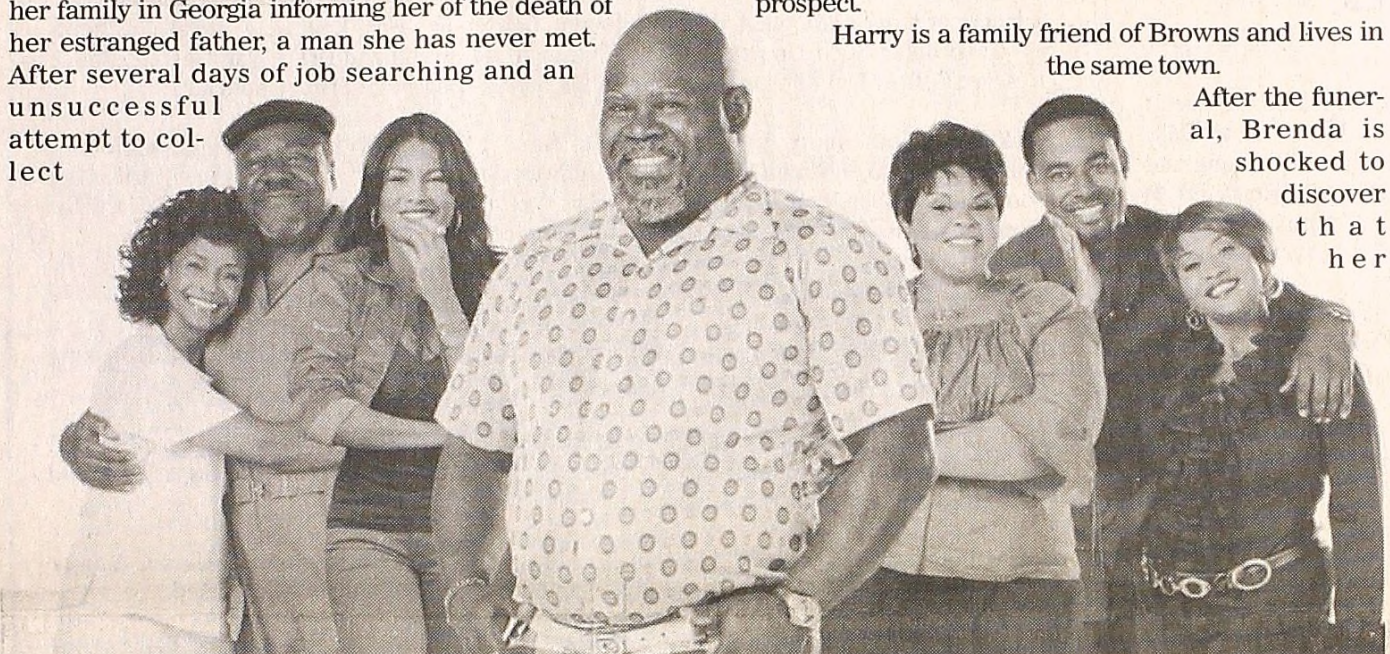
father left her a house in his will. She decides to go back to Chicago after discovering the house is in less than livable condition.

Brenda goes back to Chicago and discovers that possibly she has made a mistake. After not being able to provide for the family, her son is tempted to turn to crime to make ends meet. Harry comes to Chicago to talk to her son, but not before a tragic incident happens.

After the incident, Brenda moves the family to Georgia and discovers another surprise from the Brown family that brings her to tears. Through the experience she also becomes closer to Harry but doubt remains if his intentions for her are genuine or a ruse to become her son's agent.

Overall the movie uses comedy and real life issues such as plant closures, deadbeat parents and family secrets to show the audience that no matter how hard or complicated life gets, there is always room for hope and dreams.

Don't expect Academy Award nominations for this film, but if you want a good family film packed with laughs, this flick is for you.



CLASSIFIED

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
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1. Obituaries

BATEMAN, Lawrence E. Sr, age 81 died March 6, 2008. Dear husband of the late Clara. Father of Larry (Pamela) and the late Robert. Grandfather of Todd Bateman, Toni (Jason) Horner and Roger Bateman. Great grandfather of 7. Services were held at St Mary Catholic Church in Wayne on Monday March 10th with Jack Baker officiating. Interment took place at Michigan Memorial Park in Flat Rock. Services were entrusted to Harry J. Will Funeral Home in Wayne.



MCDANIEL, Charles Henry, age 81, died March 10, 2008. He was born January 29, 1927. Charles leaves wonderful memories to a loving wife of 50 years, Ellie; daughters, Mary McDaniel of Inkster, MI and Brooksey Gene Coggins of Sacramento, CA; sons, John McDaniel and Mark McDaniel (Cynthia) of Inkster, MI, Rev. Joe H. Walker McDaniel (Mae) of Los Angeles, CA and Bobby Joe Carey (Rhonda) of Oakland, CA; brother, Frank McDaniel of Eldorado, AR; six sisters-in-law, Lillie McDaniel of Los Angeles, CA, and Dorothy Ridgell, Melissa Lawson, Betty Jean Wade, Earnestine Hegwood (Lonnie) and Rebecca Frazier all of Eldorado, AR; two brothers-in-law, Jessie Lee Frazier and Ocoela Frazier of Eldorado, AR; nineteen grandchildren, thirteen great grandchildren, two special friends near and dear to Doc, Laura Maine and Percy Crawford; and a host of loving nieces. Services were held in the Chapel of Penn Funeral Home with Rev. Joe H. Waller McDaniel officiating. Interment was at Knollwood Cemetery, Canton, MI. Final arrangements were entrusted to Penn Funeral Home, Inkster, MI.

MENARD, Donna J. of Howell, died March 9, 2008. Loving wife of James Sharp. Dear mother of John, Rusty and William, stepmother of Debbie, Cindy, James and David. Dearest grandmother of 12. Services were held at Harry J. Will Funeral Home in Wayne on March 12th with Fr Jack Baker officiating followed by burial at Our Lady Of Hope Cemetery in Brownstown Township.



STEGALL, Willie Fred, age 68, died March 12, 2008. He was born February 28, 1940. He leaves to cherish his memories, his loving wife, Chevelle Blasingame Stegall; six children, Melody Stegall, Michael Stegall, Stanley (Teresa) Stegall, Jameele Stegall, Tameka (Paul) Williams and Deion Stegall; adopted son, Deonte Echols; six grandchildren, Cortez Stegall, Sheldon Stegall, Ciera Stegall, Jasmine Stegall, Tamiya Stegall and Ondre Alexander; eight brothers and sisters, Annie Owens, Addie Jones, Henson Stegall, John (Sandra) Stegall, Arlena (Fred) Matthews, Milton (Rosa) Stegall, Brenda Rainey and Edward (Barbara) Stegall; and a host of nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends. Services were held at the Pentecostal Temple Church of God in Christ with

Bishop Isaac King, Jr. officiating. Interment was at Detroit Memorial park West, Redford MI. Final arrangements were entrusted to Penn Funeral Home, Inkster, MI.

VOORHEIS, Doris M., age 88 of Westland, died March 18, 2008. Loving Wife of the late Clifford. Dearest mother of Sybil (Cecil) Grahl, Jane Sadley and Pamela (Donald) Unsworth. Dear Grandmother of 9, Great Grandmother of 13 and Great Great Grandmother of 1. Visitation and services were held at Harry J. Will Funeral Home in Wayne, on March 21st with Rev Kurt Radke officiating.

WHITE, Caroline, March 18, 2008 age 91 of Westland. Beloved wife of the late Ed. Whie. Dear mother of Charles (Anita) White, Joyce (Bill) Schwartz, Judy (Jim) Sumner, Della (Dennis) Danielson and the late John Edward White, Jr. Sister of Theodore Helzerman and Laura Kegley. Also survived by 10 grandchildren, 2 step grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren and 1 great great grandchild. Family received visitors and services were held at the Uht Funeral Home, Westland with interment taking place in London Twp. Cemetery, Milan, MI. Memorials to St. Jude Children's Hospital would be appreciated. Please visit and post a note of condolence at www.uhtfh.com.

30. Help Wanted

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55. Estate Sales

ESTATE SALE
36000 Currier, Wayne
Thur-Sun 3/27-3/30
8AM to 5PM
Everything must go!
Household, Xmas,
collectables, sewing,
etc.

59. Auctions

Notice is hereby given that
on 4/24/08 at 9:30 am the
following will be sold by
competitive bidding at:

Store-It Self Storage
29180 Van Born
Westland, MI 48186

Unit #143-Deborah Adams:
Household items, misc.
goods; Unit 152-Dorinda K
Wall: Household items, misc.
goods; Unit #162-Jon P.
Gamburd: Misc. goods; Unit
#165-Ann Peterson:
Household items, misc.
goods; Unit #230-Scott
Sochocki: Household items,
misc. goods; Unit #170-Ms.
Mishelle Kelly: Household
items, misc. goods; Unit
#122-Carson Outlaw:
Recreational items, house-
hold items, misc. goods;
Unit #121-Mthembemi

Langa: Household items,
misc. goods; Unit #58-
Margaret A. Green
Household items, misc.
goods; Unit #12-Maureen
Dixon: Household items,
misc. goods

Notice is hereby given that
on 4/23/08 at 2:00 pm the
following will be sold by
competitive bidding at:

National Storage Center
39205 Ford Rd.
Westland, MI 48185

Unit #186-Frederick L.
Mallard: Household items,
misc. goods; Unit #219-
Lanthya Garland: Household
items, misc. goods; Unit
#322-Michael Johnson:
Recreational items, misc.
goods; Unit #465-Cynthia K.
Starbuck: Household items,
misc. goods; Unit #511-
Caron Finch: Household
items, recreational items,
misc. goods

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AUCTION
Large waterfront/interior
homesites at Masons Pointe;
Saturday, March 29, 11am;
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Horse Auction, NCAL#3936,
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61. Misc. Items

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& Box Set
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Sec. deposit req.
Flexible move-in cost
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Sec. 8 welcome
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SPORTS



Tim Hardin hopes to restore John Glenn football to its glory years as thr new head varsity football coach.

Hardin times Glenn coach hopes to restore tradition

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

Has John Glenn football fallen on hard times?

Hardin times is more like it.

Every team has that one person—whether it's a coach, player or super-fan—that embodies the spirit of the program and bleeds school colors.

For the Glenn football squad, that person with Rocket red, white and blue pumping through their veins is Tim Hardin, the new varsity head coach. And it should be—his history with the program runs long and deep, making him a Glenn guy through and through.

The 39-year-old Westland native was handed the head varsity position earlier this month and his main goal is to return the Rockets to the glory days.

It shouldn't be too hard for Hardin. His mother has worked in the school district for more than 30 years. He went to high school at Glenn, where he played on the football team as an offensive guard and linebacker. He was a part of the first team in Glenn history to go 9-0 and make the playoffs. He has taught at Glenn for 11 years and has coached in the football program in one way or another for the last 20 years. Now his children go to school in the district.

"I'm all about John Glenn," he said. "I'm not about just football or being a head football coach. I've dedicated my life to this district. In my 20 years of coaching, I have had all of the training and all of the best training that a person could get prior to becoming a head coach."

It all started early, too.

He graduated in June 1986 and started as an assistant coach on the varsity team under famed Glenn Coach Chuck Gordon in August of the same year. His

coaching career and college education and Eastern Michigan University were briefly interrupted when he enlisted in the Army. He was stationed in Oklahoma before he headed to the Middle East for Desert Storm. He finished out his three-year term and was discharged in August, 1991.

From Oklahoma, he called Gordon, who already started the team's two-a-day practices, and secured a coaching position. The morning after he got back to Michigan he was at on the field.

He's been coaching ever since.

For 19 years he was an assistant on the varsity team, but he took the head junior varsity job last season and turned a 1-8 team around to a 6-3 unit.

Through the years, while working full time as a manager for a Nordic Track store, Hardin pieced together enough credits for a teaching degree and an English degree. He taught a year in Redford before he moved to John Glenn to teach American History.

Gordon retired four years ago, but he and Hardin remained in close contact. Hardin says they talk about four times a week, mostly as friends, but that changed last year.

"When I became the head junior varsity coach I talked to him a lot more about football," Hardin said. "He gave me a lot of advice being a head coach and I will continue to do that as the varsity coach now."

Hardin admitted that being the head varsity coach wasn't something he always wanted to do. He was actually quite satisfied with the impact he made with the players as an assistant. Then he got a taste of the larger impact he had on the players being the head JV coach and decided to set his sights higher.

"I love coaching," he said. "I

love the impact you can have with kids in coaching.

"When Chuck left I had no intention of being the head coach," he added. "I would have been happy being a coordinator under another head coach for the rest of my career. I realized—especially after being the head JV coach—as a head coach you have a significantly higher amount of an ability to impact the kids. My desire to not be a head coach was never a lack of passion for the game or for the kids. Really, I think it was a low ego—I've never had a big ego. I never had to be the top dog—I just wanted to help kids."

Now he is the top dog with 20 other coaches to help restore the Glenn pride. Hardin has 11 coaches on the varsity staff—up from just six last year.

"We want to bring back the Glenn tradition," he said. "We don't want to just maintain the tradition we want to improve it. I have a saying: innovation is not important to me, execution is."

Hardin has some strong foundations to build on. The varsity team was one victory away from the playoffs and the JV squad went 6-3, which would have been good enough for a varsity team to make the playoffs. Along the way the varsity Rockets reclaimed the City Championship from Rival Wayne, who held it for the past three years.

Glenn only has 12 players—three of them starters—returning for their senior year next season. The biggest hole to fill is at quarterback with the graduation of Keshawn Martin, who earned a football scholarship to Michigan State University.

Hardin said Martin will be tough to replace but feels they have talented players willing to

See Glenn, page 11

Wayne names new coach, Weber ready for challenge

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

All eyes will be on Kevin Weber when the Wayne Memorial Zebras take to the gridiron in August.

Forget about the players on the field. Never mind who commands the team on the opposite sideline. The focus will be on the new head varsity football coach.

After former varsity coach Craig Hnatuk's unexpectedly retired after last season, Weber was thrust into the spotlight when he became one of the youngest head coaches in the area earlier this month at the age of 26.

That's not something that bothers Weber, though.

"Only if we lose will it be a factor," he said of his youth. "It's kind of like Bobby Knight. Bobby Knight was a great coach then

all of sudden his methods were an issue when they didn't win. Age will be the same thing. If we're winning, then no one cares. If we lose then we're inexperienced—it's a double-edged sword. If the worst thing people can say about me is that I'm too young than I think I'm all right. Someday I'll be too old."

His positive energy and enthusiasm filled the eerily quiet of the office—stuck deep in the underbelly of Wayne Memorial High School—which he will call home in the fall. Classes were out of session because it was Good Friday and the emptiness of the school was a strange departure from the usual hustle and bustle that fills the halls.

Weber was already hard at work, watching footage from last season looking for ways to improve. Later he had plans to meet a coach from outside the area to collect tapes of an offense he hopes to emulate.

That's the type of guy Weber is—a hardworking leader.

Weber hails from Charlotte, a small town outside of Lansing, where he played defensive back and running back. He graduated from Western Michigan University where he earned a teaching degree.

He moved to Westland four years ago and started teaching English at the high school. He immediately took a job as an assistant coach on the junior varsity team and, after two years, was named the head JV coach.

In his first year running the JV program went 9-0. Things couldn't be any better, he said. Due to low participation numbers and inexperience on the field, the team reversed its record to 0-9 this past season.

Now it's a new ball game with new challenges. Big ones.

"It's exciting," he said. "It's going to be one of the more challenging things that I have ever done. I love a challenge. That's one of the reasons that I wanted to do it because I knew it would be a challenge. I didn't want to take the easy way and just hang out and keep doing the head JV thing. I wanted to step up and do the whole enchilada."

Although he is hungry for success, Weber will have to face some major obstacles, including participation numbers. The program had just 100 kids from top to bottom during the 2007 campaign, he said. A Division one school normally

boasts 150-plus athletes from freshman level up.

As a result, Wayne is usually forced to play a handful of players on offense and defense. That won't be an acceptable plan under Weber.

"We have to get more kids involved," he said. "We can't plan on starting six kids two ways in this league. We do that every year and every year we get banged up and then we're patching holes up."

Another challenge will be filling the hole of some prominent athletes to play in the option-spread offense that he helped establish last season. The system faired well for standout senior quarterback D.J. Freeman. He graduates in June and heads to Ferris State University on scholarship in the fall. On top of that, Freeman's younger brother Allan Freeman—a top running back and a solid receiver—defected to Inkster. Anthony Baskins, another big-time running back, also transferred out of the school.

Weber said he has plenty of athletes that are capable of stepping up. Most of them participated on the junior varsity team that went 9-0.

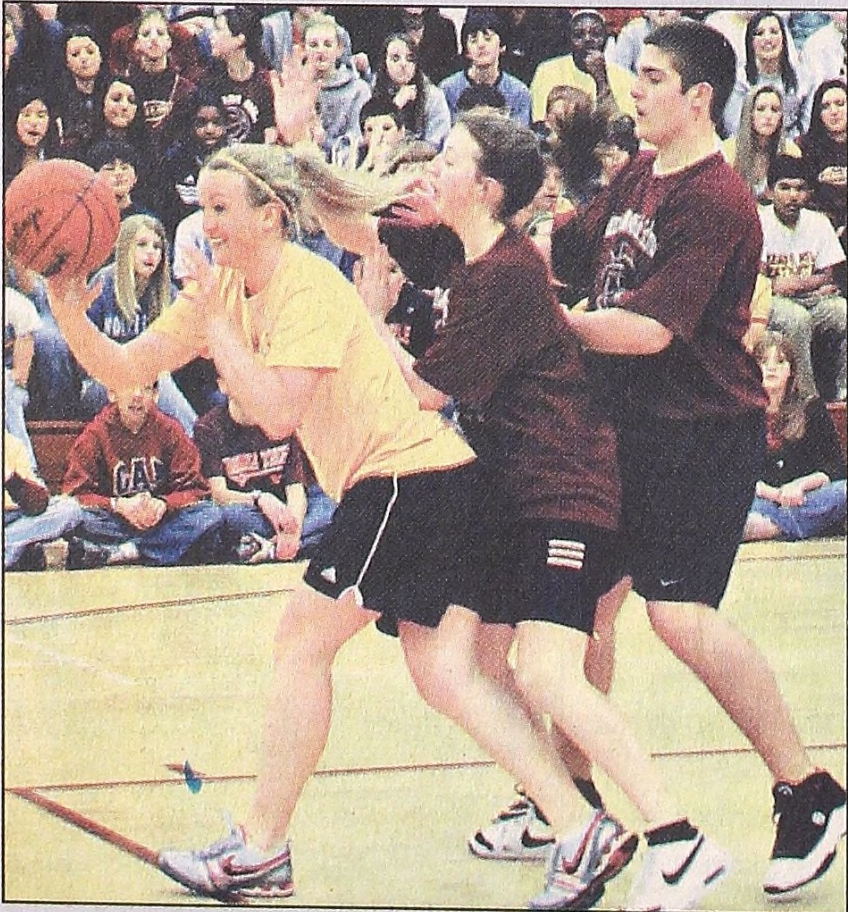
"I think that the type of offense that we play caters to the type of athlete that we typically have in our school," he said. "So we have to utilize an offense that uses that kind of athlete instead of the big kid that can smash people and move them out of the way because we don't have that. We're going to spread the field and put people in position to be athletes."

Wayne has a larger number of defensive players returning. That, with a new 4-4 scheme, should help on that side of the ball, according to Weber.

"They're all great kids," Weber said. "That's one of the things that I'm really excited about—they're absolutely wonderful kids to have."

Regardless of how the regular season progresses, the real test will

See Wayne, page 11



Slamin' charity event

The Faculty at Mead s Mill Middle School in Northville faced off against the Students in a charity basketball game (far left) last Thursday in celebration of the of 11-year-old student Christoph Bartschat's efforts to raise money for cancer research through his charity group, Christoph's A.L.L. Stars. Bartschat was diagnosed within the last year with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). As hard as the students tried the faculty pulled out a 49-31 victory. Students and faculty had a surprise visit at halftime from the Detroit Piston's Hooper and Flight Crew. Hooper, the Piston's mascot, and two Flight Crew members entertained the middle school with dancing and some high-flying, acrobatic slam-dunks (left).

SPORTS



Kitchener goaltender Steve Mason stops Plymouth's Kaine Geldart on a penalty shot on Saturday night at the Compuware Arena in Plymouth Township. Plymouth lost the match, 6-4, and trailed 0-3 in the best-of-seven quarterfinals going into Wednesday's Game 4. Photo by Walt Dmoch

Whalers trail, 0-3, in playoffs

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

Last year at this time everyone sang the praises of the Plymouth Whalers as they went on to win the OHL championship.

This year the Whalers started out on the wrong note. Heading into press time on Tuesday, Plymouth was down 0-3 against the Kitchener Rangers in the opening playoff series and faced elimination on Wednesday.

It only makes sense.

Kitchener is one of the best teams in the Canadian Hockey League and the Whalers just squeaked into the playoffs as the eighth seed in the Western Conference of the OHL.

By the time this is read the defending champs could already be making vacation plans if the Rangers pulled out another high-caliber victory at Compuware Arena on Wednesday. The results of the decisive Game 4 were unavailable at press time.

Monday's Game 3 results were in:
Host Kitchener got behind its

center Justin Azevedo, who scored a goal and notched four assists, to burn the Whalers, 7-3.

Matt Halischuk scored twice for Kitchener, while Mike Duco, Nazem Kadri, Mikkel Boedker and Mike Mascioli added single marks in the victory. The Rangers led 2-0 after one period and 4-2 after 40 minutes. The Whalers battled from behind, cutting the Kitchener lead at various points in the game to 2-1, 4-2 and 5-3. Kitchener outshot Plymouth, 32-23.

Chris Terry scored twice and added an assist for the Whalers. Joe McCann added a single goal.

The Whalers put on a better show in Game 2 at the Compuware Arena on Saturday night but they still fell short, 6-4.

Terry put Plymouth on the board first with a goal 8:14 into the first period.

Kitchener, as they have throughout the series, had an answer. The Rangers went on a three-goal scoring spree by Yannick Weber, Nazem Kadri and Halischuk respectively to take a 3-1 lead after one.

Plymouth narrowed the lead when AJ Jenks scored at the 15:16 mark of the second. Less than three minutes later, Mike Duco restored the Rangers' two-point advantage.

Then Weber and Kandari scored just 24 seconds apart in the third for a 6-2 lead.

Plymouth finished out the last 16 minutes with a goal from Christian Steingraber—his first of the season—and Patrick Lee. But that would be all for the Whalers in Game 2.

The Whalers fell to the Rangers, 9-2, in a Friday shocker at Kitchener.

The Rangers took a 4-1 lead in the first with goals from Halischuk, Ben Shutron and two from Weber. Terry scored the lone Whaler goal.

Kitchener scored five more in the second. Nick Spaling and Kadri each scored two and Halischuk one in the period.

Spaling added his third of the night in the third to give Kitchener a 9-1 lead. Lee scored the only other Whaler goal at the 14:39 mark of the third.

Wayne

FROM PAGE 10

be week seven when the Zebras face off against cross-town rival John Glenn for the City Championship—a game that was played in week nine before the merger of the Kensington Valley and Western Lakes confer-

Glenn

FROM PAGE 10

step up and fill those shoes and do some pretty good things.

One of the first and foremost goals on Hardin's mind is to get the Rockets back to the playoffs. Under the Gordon reign, John Glenn made the playoffs 15 out of his 16 years as coach.

Hardin said in order to do that has to lead by example and get the players to buy into the discipline, the character and integrity that they will try to install in them.

He thinks it's possible.

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ences.

"The rivalry will get even more intense especially since what happened after the last game," he said. "Plus, one of our assistant coaches went back to Glenn. So it will still be a big game, just a different week."

Whatever happens, all eyes will be on Weber and company from the first snap to the last.

No pressure, though.

"I think John Glenn kids are great kids," he said. "The success of our football program of the years has been for two reasons: one, great coaching and, two, great kids. We still have great kids in the district and great kids in this program. There's no reason we can't be as good as we were in the past if not better."

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Ignition scores record 29 points against Cougars

Jeff Novak
Staff Writer

The Detroit Ignition scored an all-time high 29 points against the California Cougars as they earned their seventh consecutive victory on Saturday.

Team leading scorer Jerome Beasley was the Cougars' worst nightmare. He netted five goals to lead club to the 29-12 victory in Stockton, Ca.

The scoring started early and took place often as the Ignition gained a 9-2 lead after one period.

Beasley started off the scoring for the Ignition, netting a two-point tally just 17 seconds into the match. At 4:35 of the first quarter, Hewerton Moreira buried an unassisted three-point shot to give Detroit a five-point lead. Ignition rookie Leo Gibson scored his second and third MISL career goals two minutes apart in the first, putting the Ignition up 9-0.

Forward Ryan Hall put the Cougars on the board at 12:02 with a two-point score.

The Cougars inched closer in the second when California Coach/for-

ward Bernie Lilavois scored a two-point goal with an assist from Majell Aterado just 36 seconds into the second quarter. Less than 30 seconds later, defender Evan McNeley, with an assist from Lilavois, scored two more points for the Cougars making it a 9-6 game.

Detroit got things going again at 1:52 of the second with a two-point mark from Ignition captain Droe Callahan.

After that everyone tuned into the Beasley show as he scored back-to-back-to-back tallies.

First, he put a three-point shot past California keeper Matt McDougall with an assist from Ze Roberto at 5:43. Then, 18 seconds later, he scored again to give the Ignition a 17-6 advantage. At 7:43, he scored his fourth goal of the night—a two-pointer tally with an assist from Hewerton.

With about a minute to play in the half, Lilavois stymied a Detroit rush and notched two-points for the Cougars with an assist from Aterado. The long period came to a close when defender Jonathan Greenfield closed out the half for Detroit with a two-point goal to

bring the score to 21-8.

Gibson scored the only goal in the third quarter at 11:50, pushing the Ignition's lead to 15 off a give from Ze Roberto.

Detroit forward Mike Apple started the fourth with a two-point-er at 3:39. The Cougars went back on the prowl with two goals.

Birmingham native Ryan Mack scored two points for the Ignition at 11:05 with a set-up from Ze Roberto. Beasley book-ended the near perfect game with his fifth goal of the night, bringing the final score to 29-12.

The Ignition (19-7)—still tied for first place with Milwaukee—hosts the New Jersey Ironmen (13-14) on Friday.

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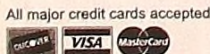
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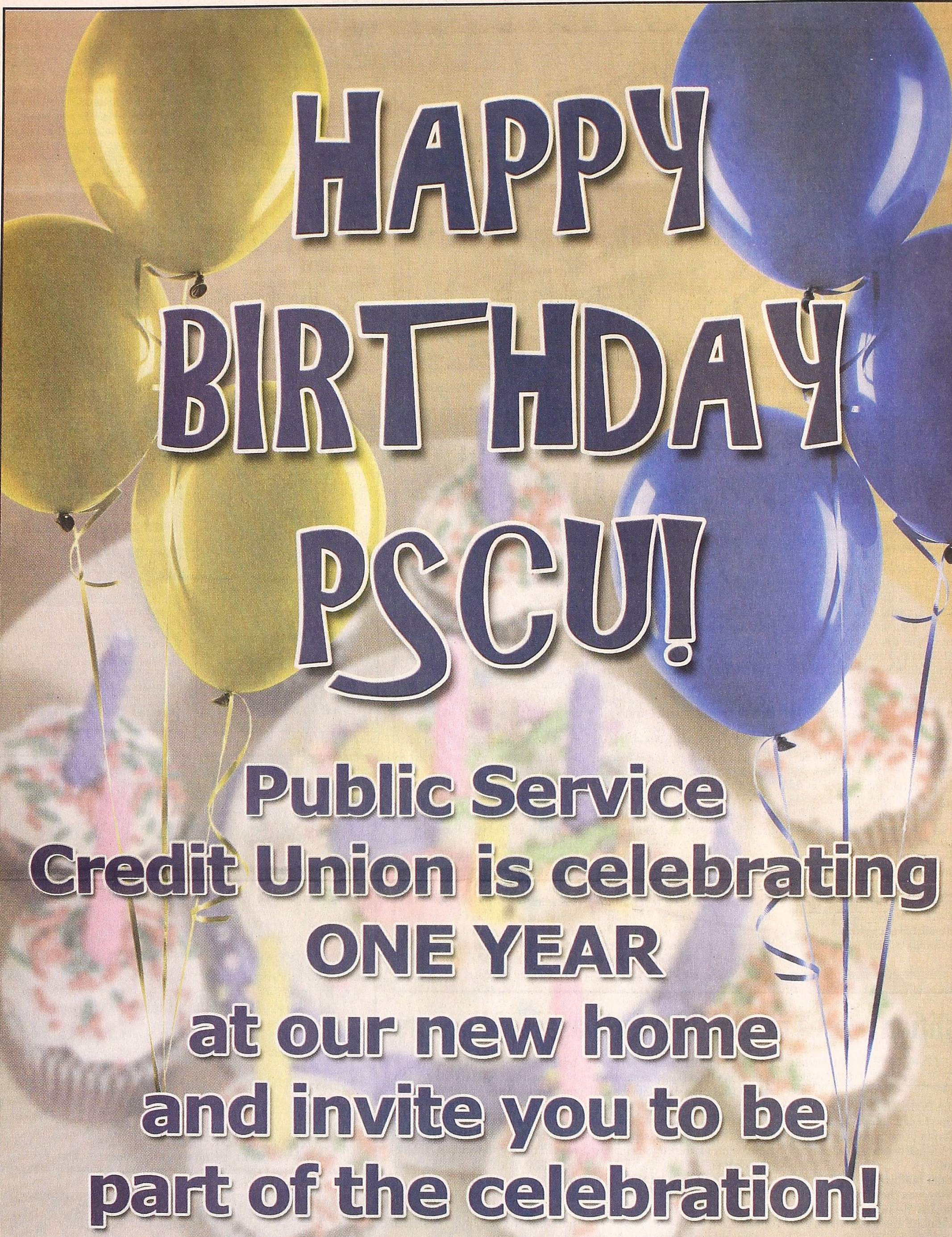
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